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Index

Sr. No.	Title of the Paper	Page no.
1.	Social Media and Well Being - Limmi Shaji Joseph, Ms. Bijal Gala	1
2.	The Industrial Basis of the Information Economy: Is Digital Technology Sustainable? - Dr. Basil Philip Kunnath	11
3.	Increasing Efficiency of English Language Learning through Digital Means - Dr. Vijay D. Songire	20
4.	Food Habits at Food Joints in Palghar: Impact of Globalization and Digital Technology and Issues of Sustainability - Dr. Ravi Shankar Mishra, Vedshri Tiwari, Shruti Patil	25
5.	Impact of Marketing of Packed Food and Beverages on Children's Health - Melista Michael Rodrigues Chaya	34
6.	Role of Emotional Intelligence in combating COVID-19 Dr. Karamvir Singh, Dr. Anshu Mathur	40
7.	Investigating the deviances in teaching learning process through Online mode - Dr Smriti Malhotra, Dr. Jipsy Malhotra, Dr. Rasna Sehrawat, Dr Priyanka Singh Niranjan	46
8.	Challenges in achieving sustainability due to digitalization of Education - Ms. Neha Aggarwal	55
9.	Impact of Digitalization among Youth and Changes in Institutions -Mrs. Dr.(Mrs) Shashi A Mishra	62
10.	Factors of Growing Mental Health Issues among female Teacher/professor working from home during Corona Pandemic Crisis - Ms. Urvashi Bhagat	68
11.	Aquaponics: A Way of Green Technology - Dr. Devdatta Lad	76
12.	Exploring the Role of Persuasive Technology to Promote Sustainable Behaviour - Ms. Neelima Sachwani	79
13	Soft Skills and Business Development - Dr. Sonal Mehetaa	84

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IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION AMONG YOUTH AND CHANGES IN INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: Civilization is evolutionary in nature. Human civilization had to undergo various difficult and complex processes of changes to achieve the final shape of the human body i.e., from the gorilla stage to the structure of human beings. Development and progress took place in society when humans began discovering and inventing, which in turn led a slow but monumental change in culture and structure of society. It also shaped institutions in a better way. In the process of evolution some of the important institutions like marriage, family, religion and politics came into existence and evolved slowly for betterment of society. Since ancient times, society and social institutions created by human beings have passed through different stages of change before arriving at the present stage. In contemporary situations, growing influence of the digital media systems, which have gained at rapid pace during the Covid 19 pandemic have significantly impacted the institution of marriage. This study aims to highlight some ways in which digitalization has affected modern day marriages.

This paper seeks to discuss the influence of Digitalization among youth and continuous changes in the basic social Institutions of India in terms of marriage, family, politics and religion. Here researchers will be specifically focusing on Change in the institution of marriage and also influence of digitalization. Indian society during the pandemic has gone through a turbulent emotional setback which has affected all aspects of society and marriage is one part of it . During the pandemic we all confined ourselves to the four walls of the house and thus our dependency on social media and the digital world had increased. This paper is based on data collection in terms of books, journals and websites and online interviews. Before the pandemic, digitalization had slowly started to impact marriages, however, since the pandemic this process has become very rapid. Researcher in this paper seeks to explore the slow process of nature and changing situations in the institutions of marriage i.e growing digitalisation among youth and its positive and negative aspects in the institutions of marriage.

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Keywords: Digitalization, Institutions, Evolution , Solemnised , Pandemic

Introduction: At the advent of civilization, human beings were living like hunters and food gatherers. Here they did not know how to prepare food, and were thus dependent on raw flesh of animals which they obtained through hunting, raw vegetables and fruits. Further they had no formal education so there was no

development in verbal interaction, roads, transport and currency system. Communication with other human beings was done in the form of sounds, gestures as there was no development in language. With the discovery of fire, which was invented by rubbing stone, brought a revolutionary change in the life of man. Fire provided man not only with cooked food but also protection from wild animals. This is probably the stage where man started living in groups near the banks of river as water was essential for life and was also used for daily chores of cleaning living areas, washing clothes and vessels, gardening , farming and so on. Cultivation and domestication of animals also started while living near the banks of rivers. It has brought tremendous change in the life of human beings as agriculture and market developed. Hence due to the settled life the need for family came into being. Thus, it led to the ensuring of the beginning of institutions in human society. Growth of civilization in the form of civilised human being was a very time consuming process but this was responsible for the origin of the institutions ie marriage and family followed by religion, family, economy and politics. Marriage and procreation of children became necessary for the continuity of race and family who would be the owners of their property and will eventually take care of the property. Thus marriage as an important institution came into existence.

Marriage is an important and almost a universal social institution in India. It is a relationship, which is socially approved. The relationship is defined and sanctioned by custom and law. Marriage is now one of the oldest social institutions. Since ancient times, society gave acceptance and a name to the relationship between man and woman as husband and wife. Marriage establishes rights and obligations between the married couple, and their in-laws as well as between them and their children. Children born of marriage are considered the legitimate offspring of the married couple. This legitimacy is important in the matter of inheritance and succession. Since marriage is considered as a significant commitment between the married partners, extra-marital relationships are strongly disapproved of by the society.

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Established form of Institutions and Importance of Marriage in India

In Indian society marriage is considered as not only a sacrament and a union of two partners but also a union of two families by doing lavish and elaborate arrangements in the form of inviting a large number of guests consisting of three generations, relatives and friends. The elaborate celebrations start with engagement ring ceremony with closed relatives, bachelors party, haldi, mehendi, pre wedding photo sessions and a grand reception for the solemnization of marriage.

This topic has been selected for presentation because marriage as an institution and various functions of marriage since its reception has always been an important social

backbone for healthy growth and survival of society. Marriage as an important institution provides to fulfil satisfaction of sexual desire, procreation of children, continuity of family race but at the same time it is also related with overall healthy physical, mental and emotional personality growth of the person. In Indian ethos Grihasthashrama- an important Ashrama Vayastha of Hindu society constitute a man to fulfil dharma, artha, rati or kama. Marriage was related with stability of family, worldly responsibility, welfare of family and responsibility towards elderly parent and society. The equilibrium of the system requires adjustment and balance between the two different members of the family so that the role enactment of one corresponds to the role expectations of the other.

Auguste Comte, the father of Sociology introduced the theory of positivism Emphasis on the study of social static and social dynamics theory which believes in the theory of social change and thus social change in society is a continuous process. Auguste Comte's theory in terms of social dynamics is founded in society in the terms of law of the three stages; in society it starts with evolution and change. Terms introduced by Auguste Comte are theological, metaphysical, and positivist stages or scientific change. Society has evolved from tribal stage-food gathering society to peasants stage-agricultural society and finally urban stage-technologically well developed society. In the same way institutions of society like marriage, family, religion, economy, politics changed and evolved from time to time to suit the changing social structures and systems. This change in the process of social structure is one that people can modify or accelerate as their requirements, but in the end the laws of progressive development directly or indirectly related with the development of society, social institutions and social structure. Traditional institution of marriage has also changed and evolved in various phases to reach the modern digitalization aspect of marriage among the youth.

Changes in the institution of marriage among youth came into existence due to migration of parents to the city, education with professional specialisation, influence of modern technology and changing city culture. Customs related with marriage like age of marriage, practice of monogamy, social sanction to live in relationships and use of internet connectivity to collect and maintain the evidence to get divorce. Basic objective of marriage to fulfil dharma and some of the other basic aspects related with marriage is challenged by the youth. It is also supported due to digital use and economic independence of women have had brought in a completely new understanding in trends of marriage. Some changes in institution of marriage apart from digitalization are as follows :

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- **Gay and Lesbian couples:** Gay and lesbian couples are homosexual couples in society. However, society has still not accepted gay and lesbian couples.

Many times such couples may try to adopt children in order to complete the family.

- **Prenuptial Agreement:** The prenuptial agreement is a formally written, signed, registered, recognised and notarized document. It is related to distribution of property and responsibility in case of separation of the couple. The agreement also includes terms and conditions of giving up property on the basis of adultery. Prenuptial agreements are important as they encourage transparency of information, consider both husband and wife as equal and reduce the conflict between both parties. A peculiar disadvantage of prenuptial agreements is that they can encourage the idea of dissolution of marriage. Prenuptial agreements are not considered as valid in India because as per marriage laws in India, marriage is considered as a sacred union between the husband and wife. It is not considered as a contract.

- **Destination Weddings:** A destination wedding is a wedding planned in advance and held in a location far from home where the couple, their families and their guests stay for about a week and where all activities related to that wedding take place. A destination wedding is an amazing opportunity for couples to celebrate their marriage in a dream destination of their choice – no matter how far away. Destination weddings are gradually gaining popularity over regular weddings. They are usually more fun and are usually more intimate. They include only a few close relatives and friends to celebrate the wedding. They are like a mini vacation for the couple, their families as well as for the guests. Destination weddings offer freshness to the entire experience of getting married. A significant characteristic of destination weddings is that guests need to travel to the place of wedding to attend it which can be a financial burden. Hence the guest list may automatically narrow down.

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Changes in Institution, Digitalization and Pandemic Situations

The Indian situation of solemnization of marriage has undergone drastic change after the pandemic situation. The change also has been supported due to increasing digitalization led to the happening of block chain marriages in Pune, Metaverse marriage in Tamilnadu, and Virtual wedding receptions. One varied form of change in the institution of marriage is the Blockchain system is being explored and used to conduct marriages. Blockchain is a system of recording information in a way that makes it difficult or impossible to change, hack, or cheat the system. A Pune based couple tied the knot using blockchain technology from the Open Sea platform. The ceremony documented India's first 'blockchain wedding. Blockchain marriages don't have legal weight in Indian law (or even US law for that matter), it surely is an

attractive option for couples due to its unchanging behaviour as unlike a traditional marriage certificate that would deteriarate with time, this one would stay in the blockchain forevever. In digital space wedding Metaverse is the virtual where virtually presence of priest, relatives, friends and ancestors 3D Image can be created on the digital platforms. On Metaverse any number of people can virtually attend the marriage. In India this is still not legal as per customs physical presence is necessary for marriage. A virtual wedding is a wedding where the priest, guests, relatives and couple are joined together by video call. This is accepted legally as there is physical presence.

In recent times, there are exclusive marriage websites like Shaadi.com, Bharat Matrimony, etc. which help youngsters find a suitable life partner. Tech-savvy Indians can acquire necessary information about potential partners through social media, texting or telephoning. Thus organising marriages in contemporary situations has undergone changes; it is more and more digital in nature.

Digital marriages in Pandemic time 2019-2020 was shown to really be a boon for some getting married. The money for catering, designer dresses, halls and other rituals was saved and could be used for a big trip with loved ones. It could also be used for future savings. Many couples also donated their saved money to a noble cause and helped people affected by the pandemic. Even though online and digitised marriages were cost effective and had several other benefits there were also some drawbacks. For many couples, who always dreamt of the big fat wedding, digital marriages were disappointing. In some situations, many couples also considered the traditional marriage after digital marriage as due to limitations caused by online marriages, they were not able to celebrate their special day with many people.

Conclusion: Indian marriages are usually grand and celebrated lavishly. Traditional India, was forced to shift to unique digitised techniques to satisfy the purpose of marriage during the COVID-19 pandemic. While online marriages are cost effective, they are still not preferred by many people. We do not know if online marriages are here to stay but they have most certainly become another valuable option for Indian citizens.

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